WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of storing digital images within a computer system comprising:

identifying a first storage facility and a directory within the first storage facility

5   for storing a digital image;

generating a first image identifier associated with the first storage facility and

the directory;

generating a second image identifier comprising a random number;

generating a unique hash value by encrypting the first and second image

10   identifiers;

identifying a storage path using the first and second image identifiers and the

unique hash value such that related digital images have unrelated storage paths.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the digital image is received from at least one of a

15   subscriber of the computer system and a third party associated with the subscriber.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein identifying a storage path comprises extracting

storage path information from at least one of the first image identifier and the second image

identifier.

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4. The method of claim 3 further comprising translating the extracted storage path

information.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein identifying a storage path comprises using the

25   unique hash value as a filename.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising storing the digital image in the first

storage facility at the identified storage path.

30   7. The method of claim 6 further comprising generating and storing lower resolution

thumbnails at the identified storage path.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising identifying a second storage facility for storing metadata describing the digital image.

5   9. The method of claim 8 wherein identifying a second storage facility comprises encoding account information associated with the digital image.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the account information comprises a screen name associated with a subscriber.

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11. The method of claim 9 further comprising mapping the encoded account information to an appropriate storage space group containing second storage facility.

12. The method of claim 8 further comprising storing metadata describing the digital

15   image in the second storage facility.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising providing access to the stored digital image and the stored metadata.

20   14. The method of claim 1 wherein generating the unique hash value comprises applying at least on of the MD5 algorithm and the DEC algorithm to the first and second image identifiers.

15. A digital image storage apparatus, comprising a host configured to:

25   identify a first storage facility and a directory within the first storage facility
        for storing a digital image;
            generate a first image identifier associated with the first storage facility and the
        directory;
            generate a second image identifier comprising a random number;
30   generate a unique hash value by encrypting the first and second image
        identifiers;

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identify a storage path using the first and second image identifiers and the unique hash value such that related digital images have unrelated storage paths.

5   16.   A computer program, stored on a computer readable medium, comprising instructions for:

identifying a first storage facility and a directory within the first storage facility for storing a digital image;

generating a first image identifier associated with the first storage facility and

10   the directory;

generating a second image identifier comprising a random number;

generating a unique hash value by encrypting the first and second image identifiers;

identifying a storage path using the first and second image identifiers and the

15   unique hash value such that related digital images have unrelated storage paths.

17.   The computer program of claim 16 wherein the computer readable medium comprises a disk.

20   18.   The computer program of claim 16 wherein the computer readable medium comprises a client device.

19.   The computer program of claim 16 wherein the computer readable medium comprises a host device.

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20.   The computer program of claim 16 wherein the computer readable medium comprises a propagated signal.

21.   A method of storing digital images within a computer system comprising:

generating at least one image identifier associated with a first storage facility, a directory within the first storage facility, and a random number; and

identifying a storage path using the at least one image identifier such that
5   related digital images have unrelated storage paths.

22. A method of monitoring digital images comprising:

receiving a complaint associated with a digital image from a first subscriber; and

regulating access of the first subscriber to the digital image.